6 Eng. Poetry vol 61.

VENUS

ATTIRING THE GRACES.

ADDRESSED TO ——

IN NAKED BEAUTY MORE ADORN'D,
MORE LOVELY.

MILTON.

LONDON:
Printed for J. DODSLEY in Pall-Mall. 1777.

Price SIX-PENCE.

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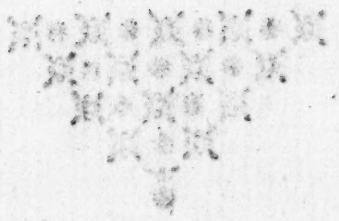

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To ——

SAY, ſhall a Bard in theſe late times
Dare to addreſs his trivial rhimes
To Her, whom PRIOR, POPE, and GAY,
And every Bard, who breath'd a lay
Of happier vein, was fond to chooſe
The Patroneſs of every Muſe?

Say, can he hope that You, the theme
Of partial SWIFT's ſevere eſteem,
You, who have borne meridian rays,
And triumph'd in poetic blaze,
Ev'n with indulgence ſhould receive
The fainter gleams of ebbing Eve.

He will: and boldly ſay in print
That 'twas your —— who gave the hint;
Who told him that the preſent ſcene
Of dreſs, and each prepoſterous faſhion,
Flow'd from ſupineneſs in the men,
And not from female inclination.
That Women were oblig'd to try
All ſtratagems to catch the eye,
And many a wild vagary play
To gain attention any way.
'Twas merely cunning in the Fair.—
This *may* be true—But have a care;
Your —— will contradict, in part,
Your own aſſertion, and *my* ſong,
Whoſe Beauty, undiſguis'd by art,
Has charm'd ſo much, and charm'd ſo long.

VENUS

ATTIRING THE GRACES.

AS VENUS one day, at her toilet affairs,
With the Graces attending, adjuſted her airs,
In a negligent way, without boddice or hoop,
As * GUIDO has painted the beautiful group,
(For GUIDO, no doubt, in idea at leaſt,
Had ſeen all the Graces and VENUS undreſt.)

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* The celebrated picture of VENUS *attired* by the Graces.

Half

Half penſive, half ſmiling, the Goddeſs of Beauty
Look'd round on the girls, as they toil'd in their duty,
And ſurely, ſhe cry'd, you have ſtrangely miſcarry'd,
That not one of the three ſhould have ever been marry'd.
Let me nicely examine—Fair foreheads, ſtraight noſes,
And cheeks that might rival AURORA's own roſes;
Lips; teeth; and what eyes! that can languiſh, or roll,
To enliven or ſoften the elegant whole.
The ſweet auburn treſſes, that ſhade what they deck,
The ſhoulders, that fall from the delicate neck:
The poliſh'd round arm, which *my* ſtatues might own,
And the lovely contour which deſcends from the zone.

Then how it ſhould happen I cannot divine:
Either you are too coy, or the Gods too ſupine.
I believe 'tis the latter; for every ſoft boſom
Muſt have it's attachments, and wiſh to diſcloſe 'em.

Some

Some lovers not beauty but novelty warms,
They have ſeen you ſo often they're tir'd of your charms.
But I'll find out a method their languor to move,
And at leaſt make them ſtare, if I can't make them love.

* Come here, you two girls, that look full in my face,
And you that ſo often are turning your back,
Put on theſe cork rumps, and then tighten your ſtays
'Till your hips, and your ribs, and the ſtrings themſelves crack.
Can ye ſpeak? can ye breathe?—Not a word—Then 'twill do.
You have often dreſs'd *me*, and for once I'll dreſs *you*.

---

* Alluding to the uſual repreſentation of the Graces.

Don't let your curls fall with that natural bend,
But ſtretch them up tight 'till each hair ſtands an end.
One, two, nay three cuſhions, like Cybele's tow'rs;
Then a few ells of gauze, and ſome baſkets of flow'rs.
Theſe bottles of nectar will ſerve for perfumes.
Go pluck the fledg'd Cupids, and bring me their plumes.
If that's not enough, you may ſtrip all the fowls,
My doves, JUNO's peacocks, and PALLAS's owls.
And ſtay, from JOVE's eagle, if * napping you take him,
You may ſnatch a few quills—but be ſure you don't wake him.

Hold!

---

* *Napping*—The ſleeping Eagle in PINDAR.

Thus tranſlated by WEST.

Perch'd on the ſcepter of th' Olympian king,
The thrilling darts of harmony he feels;
And indolently hangs his rapid wing,
While gentle ſleep his cloſing eyelid ſeals;

And

Hold! what are ye doing? I vow and proteſt
If I don't watch you cloſely you'll ſpoil the whole jeſt.

And o'er his heaving limbs in looſe array
To every balmy gale the ruffling feathers play.

Thus imitated by AKENSIDE.

With ſlackened wings,
While now the ſolemn concert breathes around,
Incumbent o'er the ſcepter of his Lord
Sleeps the ſtern Eagle; by the number'd notes
Poſſeſs'd; and ſatiate with the melting tone:
Sovereign of Birds.

And thus by GRAY.

Perching on the ſcepter'd hand
Of JOVE, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of ſlumber lie
The terror of his beak, and light'nings of his eye.

What I have diſorder'd you ſtill ſet to rights,
And ſeem half unwilling to make yourſelves frights.
What I am concealing you want to diſplay;

But it ſhan't ſerve the turn, for I will have my way.
Thoſe crimp'd colet'montés don't reach to your chins,
And the heels of your ſlippers are broader than pins.
You can ſtand, you can walk, like the girls in the ſtreet;
Thoſe buckles won't do, they ſcarce cover your feet.
Here, run to the Cyclops, you Boys without wings,
And bring up their boxes of contraband things.—

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Well, now you're bedizen'd, I'll ſwear, as ye paſs,
I can ſcarcely help laughing—Don't look in the glaſs.

Thoſe tittering Boys ſhall be whipt if they teaze you.
So, come away, Girls. From your torments to eaſe you,
We'll haſte to Olympus, and get the thing over;
I have *not* the leaſt doubt but you'll each find a lover.
And if it ſucceeds, with a torrent of mirth
We'll peſter their Godſhips agen, and agen;
Then ſend the receipt to the Ladies on Earth,
And bid *them* become Monſters, till Men become Men.

FINIS.